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ABSTRACT

Findings of a case study that examined ways in which an urban high school principal successfully improved an urban high school are presented in this paper, with attention to social interaction processes. Data were collected through interviews with the principal and 10 teachers and through questionnaires administered to the 10 teachers. Findings suggest that the principal's leadership style was characterized by the use of opportunism, persistence, teacher rapport, and resource procurement. A distinction was made between the principal's mission (survival of the school) and vision (academic renewal). The principal also acted as an entrepreneurial program manager and a coordinator. By creating a climate of academic achievement and high student expectations, he demonstrated that principal behaviors are directly related to instructional effectiveness. Three tables and one figure are included. (Contains 32 references.) (LMI)

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Translating a School Improvement Agenda into Practice:

A Social Interaction Perspective to the Principalship

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Abstract

This case study examines how a principal's beliefs (e.g., mission and vision) were translated into a school improvement agenda. Burke's mission (making Nottingham High School safe enough for his own children to attend) was accomplished largely through unilateral, top-down strategies (e.g., appointment of new department heads). Rebuilding the curriculum into rigorous college preparatory school to which middle-class parents would (once again) want to send their children was Burke's vision: More demanding students would stimulate certain teachers to revamp curricula. Burke's administrative strength consisted of developing professional rapport with these teachers (entrepreneurial program managers) and providing them the appropriate resources. Implications are made for school improvement practice.

Since many students enter the work force out of high school, a current priority is improving the knowledge and skills taught in high schools and lowering high school dropout rates. Marc Tucker, president of the Carnegie National Center on Education and the Economy, concluded that the United States school-to-work transition was the worst in the industrialized world. This school-to-work transition has been characterized by a growing gap between the skills possessed by non-college workers and the demands of the job market (Olson, 1990).

The national concern for maintaining our global competitiveness has resulted in numerous studies of high schools (Boyer, 1983; Sizer, 1984; Powell, Farrar & Cohen, 1985). The commissioned writers of A Nation at Risk intended to discuss all schooling (K-12). Most of the report, however, was used to make recommendations for improvement for high schools. Since principals are critical to school success (Cubberly, 1923; Goodlad, 1955; Greenfield, 1982), the high school principal logically becomes a subject of inquiry.

Although courses in education administration (EA) have been taught at least since 1885 (Culbertson; cited by Achilles, 1990), we know very little about successful **practices** related to daily and long term school improvement. The principalship has been characterized as hectic, sporadic and unpredictable (Peterson, 1977-78), and dictated by personal survival and crisis management (Blumberg & Greenfield, 1980; Howell, 1981). Characterizing the principalship, however, is not synonymous with identifying practices of successful secondary principals. This lack of knowledge has made some observers question whether education administration is a profession, since we lack a codified body of knowledge (Guthrie & Clifford, 1989). Identifying **what successful principals do** must be synthesized with EA theory and models to form the "substantive data base" (Culbertson, 1988) and a "distinctive body of

knowledge" (Bok, 1987) for principal training programs. Such inquiries can help make education administration a profession. This researcher made such an inquiry by conducting a field investigation to identify what a successful high school principal (Burke) did to improve an urban high school (Nottingham High School). [1]

Research Questions and Methodology

This study's two research questions were: 1. **What was Burke's school improvement agenda?** 2. **What practices did he use in improving Nottingham High School (NHS)?**

The following procedure was used to identify Burke as a "successful" high school principal.

1. A pool of successful principals was identified through the nomination technique. The researcher called Regional Educational Service Agencies (RESA) directors, superintendents, professors of educational leadership, and other officials. The two criteria for the nomination process were that the principal had gained a reputation for "turning a school around" during his tenure; and that following this tenure phase, student outcomes improved significantly.

2. Final selection of the principal included these variables:

a. long term (at least three years) increase in student achievement as measured by standardized tests;

b. decrease in high school dropout rate;

c. decrease in suspension and/or expulsion rate;

d. decrease in student retention rates;

e. increase in rate of students accepted to post-secondary education;

f. increase in employment rates of graduates; and

g. the current principal has been there at least three years.

Methodology consisted of the single case study with a social-interaction perspective: Organization member attitudes and norms are shaped far more by informal negotiation and interaction than by state and district rules and regulations. Each organization player has a perspective, often influenced by perceptions of others (Blumer, 1969; Denzin, 1978). Since organization interaction results in "negotiating meanings in context" (Anderson, 1989), social norms (Homans, 1958) were used as a source for shared meanings about the NHS culture.

Three data sets were collected through: 1) principal interview; 2) teacher interview; and 3) norm checklist. (See Figure 1 for the research model).

Interview data were recorded first as field notes, then audio-taped and transcribed for analysis. In a series of five interviews, Burke described both his intentions and strategies used in improving NHS.

Ten teacher interviewees individually shared their perceptions on how Burke contributed to NHS's school improvement. These perceptions were categorized by common characteristics (Spradley, 1979; Blase, 1990) into substantive categories: Inter-rater agreement among three EA professors was 81%.

Tentative norms were compiled by asking the ten teacher participants: "Can you construct any norms describing behavioral expectations both for your principal and for teachers?" The researcher reviewed and discussed these tentative norms with a group of six of these participants to generate face validity: Did these norms make sense or did some relate only to a few NHS personnel? Informants helped the researcher remove any phrases potentially distracting to teacher respondents.

All teachers were asked to complete the school-wide norm checklist . Respondents were instructed to: 1) mark "yes" if they perceived that a norm existed at NHS--regardless of whether they agreed philosophically with that norm; 2) mark "no" if

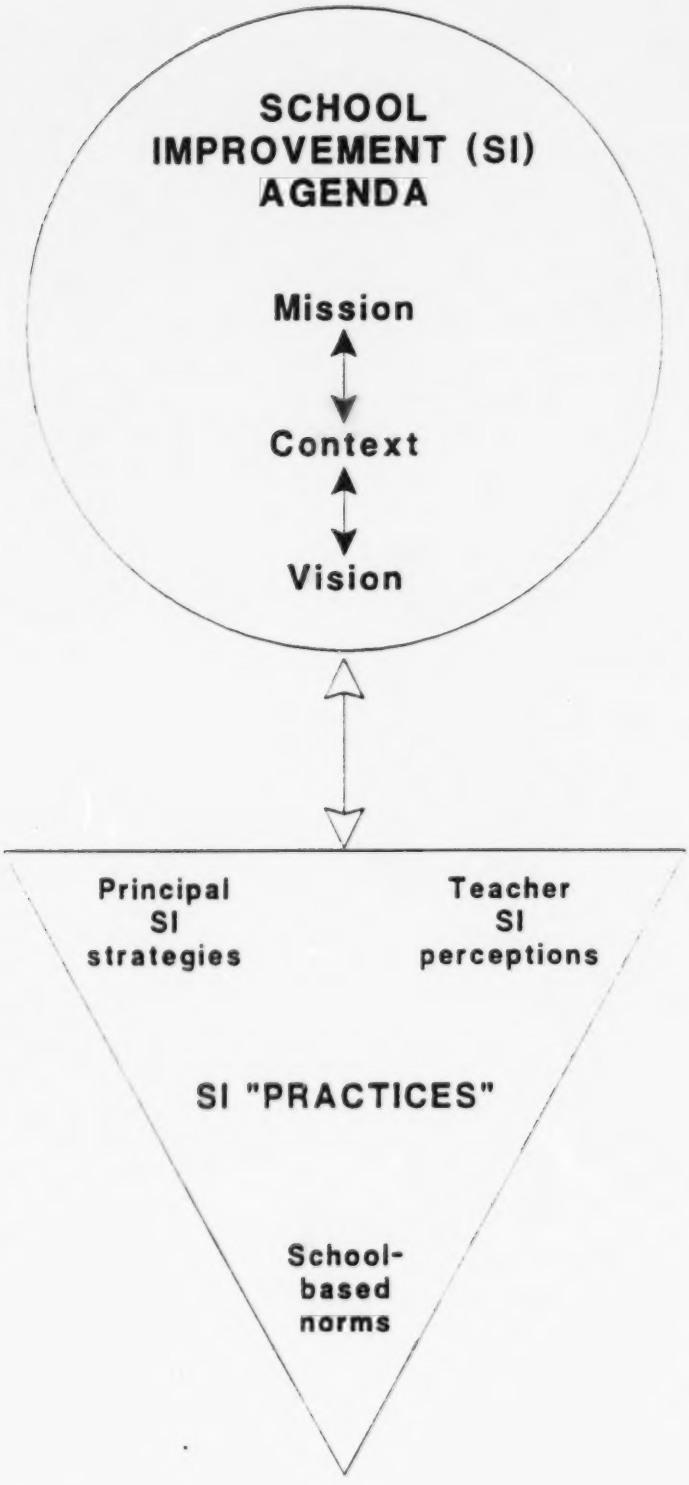
from their perspective this norm did not characterize principal-teacher and teacher-teacher interactions; and 3) leave an item "blank" about which they had insufficient information (e.g., respondents with a relatively brief tenure at NHS). The checklist return rate was 70%. The reliability coefficient alpha estimate was .84. Norms perceived as occurring by more than 70% were interpreted as accepted behavioral expectations at NHS (Foskett, 1967; Keedy, 1982).

The researcher's purpose was not simply to describe but to explore possible explanations for how power was used and perceived by NHS players. (For a similar intention, see Smylie & Denny, 1990.) Systematic thematic analysis (Plummer, 1983) was used in which the researcher slowly develops a series of themes subject to validation by the informants during the series of interviews. Tentative patterns in the data were validated by Burke (during the series of five interviews) and by teachers at the end of their interviews. Using the comparative method of content analysis (Weber, 1985), study findings were grounded in the data themselves (see Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Principal and teacher interview data and norm checklist data were compared for "goodness of fit" (Marshall, 1985).

Insert Figure 1 about here

Principal interview data were used to construct a chronological framework providing: 1) an interpretation of Burke's intentions and strategies for an analysis of power; and 2) an organization context for events used to analyze the teacher

Figure 1. Research Model



empowerment process. These contextualized data were synthesized with both interview data of the teachers and teacher norm data to construct the two thematic analyses.

Summaries from the two questions were synthesized for the case study interpretation. Findings from this case study interpretation were compared with current research on school improvement for the theoretic discussion.

Case Study Background

Nottingham High School, built on 24 acres, had its first graduating class in 1959. The school plant consisted of eight single-story, flat-roofed buildings connected by walkways. The red brick facade housed 53 classrooms with air conditioning (except in certain rooms). The roofs leaked, and there were usually receptacles in the corridors. There were no faculty restrooms or storage areas, nor enough power for the electronics of the 1990s. The school in general was functional but verged on becoming rundown.

Urban Integration

In the mid 1960s, with integration in this large city on the southeastern seaboard, "white flight" occurred. Approximately one third of the white parents withdrew their children and placed them in independent schools or church-affiliated schools. The neighborhood had been predominately suburban. During integration, however, Blacks were bussed in from the downtown area. By the time of the study, the neighborhood was integrated. Fewer students from the attendance zone attended NHS. The student enrollment had remained fairly constant at around 1300, and at the time of this study between 150 and 200 students from private schools were attending NHS. Parents had become convinced that NHS had a competitive college preparatory program and they did not want to pay private school tuition. Also, as the

state education agency had required a more rigorous program of studies (e.g., two or three foreign languages, each taught for four years), some parents doubted that independent schools could keep up this pace or pay their faculties as well as suburban-urban public schools.

Student Demographics at NHS

The racial composition of the student body of 1300 had remained at approximately 50:50 white to black (during Burke's tenure). The 150-200 predominately white students who had come from private schools over the last four or five years had been offset by minority families moving into this area. The socioeconomic status of the minority families ranged from people living in projects to blue collar households to owners of half million dollar homes. Burke believed the full range of socioeconomic statuses, both white and black, was a strength to the school. The whites and blacks on the top of the economic ladder offset the blue collar and the economically disadvantaged.

Faculty/Staff

Principal Burke had had several assistant principals during his ten years. Apparently Burke was a good mentor. Four of these assistant principals became principals at other schools. NHS had a stable faculty, many of whom had been at NHS during its college preparatory phase of the 1970s. In the nine years before this study, no teacher had been asked to leave. The staff currently included 56 teachers.

There had been six principals in this school's history. The first two principals had short tenures. They were followed by a principal of 17 years. Apparently, it was tough following this eminently successful principal, because the next two principals lasted one year and two years, respectively, before Burke took over in 1980. Burke was in his tenth year of tenure at the time of the study (1990).

District Politics

According to Teacher No. 6, there was considerable jealousy at the central office regarding NHS. "There are six high schools and it doesn't always work well when one particular high school wants to trumpet its successes. The perception was out there that all we got were the best kids, that all of our kids were in the magnet program for math and science. We have a school within a school. We have the special program whose name was changed three times, but we also have a full range of courses for our students with goals ranging from obtaining the General Education Development (GED) to getting into Harvard."

Magnet and Select School Concepts

This combined city-county district was approximately 60% black and 40% white. District officials were under a federal court order for integration to design school attendance zones approximating the 60:40 ratio in each school. The officials could not control, however, how many predominately white students would not attend a public school, but go to an independent school.

To attract white students back to public schools, district officials started magnet schools in 1986. The magnet system as operationalized, however, did not work. Students first would go to the schools in their attendance zone, then get on the bus to go to one of two magnet high schools for two periods, and then go back to their own high schools. With the change in board policy NHS was chosen as the magnet school for math and science. White students were attracted back to NHS so that the racial mix changed to 50:50.

The magnet school program began in 1986-87 as the Advanced Academic Program in Math and Science. In 1988-89 the board changed the program name to Select, because they wanted less of a perception that it was a magnet program. "Now,

two other schools are in the running for being perceived as specialty schools, one for the medical orientation, and a second for business and law. So our program is now called the engineering and robotics program to differentiate from the other two high schools. The board had been getting nervous because the district was still under a federal court order for desegregation from the early 1970s and there was a concern that the racial mix would lose balance. Regarding our program, there was criticism in the community at large that we actively recruit students, but we really do not. We just offer information and advice to interested parents and students" (Teacher No. 5).

Burke's School Improvement Agenda

Burke wanted to make Nottingham High School (NHS) safe enough to send his own children there (his mission).

The superintendent had assigned Burke to restore law and order at NHS, which reputedly was being run by students. Drugs were widespread. The faculty was racially split. During that first year, 1980-81, Burke knew that he had to: 1) survive and get the school under control; 2) deal with a certain lack of professionalism among some teachers; and 3) solve the racial split among the faculty. The strategy section will describe specifically how he accomplished this mission. Only then was Burke able to conceptualize his vision.

He first conceived his vision in 1981 and implemented it during 1981-85: Rebuilding the curriculum into a rigorous college preparatory program. He also wanted the students to think, "BIG," not just to get in the state universities, but also to get into Harvard and other elite schools. With this vision in mind Burke was able to exploit a local board decision.

When the board mandated the math and science magnet program, Burke leaped for the opportunity. Once implemented, the math and science magnet program

influenced higher parents in the higher socioeconomic ramge to begin sending their children to NHS. What he had hoped for happened. The more ambitious and intellectually aggressive children who had transferred from private schools to NHS pushed the curriculum and the teachers. In response to this pressure, Burke and the staff used different programs, such as advanced placement courses to meet the needs of these "new breed" college preparatory students.

Burke acted as a program facilitator during this phase (1985-88). He then set two goals: 1) meeting the needs of the less fortunate; and 2) decreasing drop-out rates. These goals related to his second vision: By building up the self-esteem of the educationally disadvantaged, (partly by helping them achieve success and getting them through ninth grade) students would stay in school.

Burke's sense of mission was instrumental in getting control of the school. Then Burke demonstrated an uncanny sense of vision. He appeared always to be a few steps ahead of district and NHS personnel in knowing where to lead NHS and what the consequences would be for each developmental stage (his visions). His sense of vision was closely related to school context largely because district politics and desegregation policies played into his hands.

Burke's School Improvement Practices

This section contains Burke's strategies (supported by his chronological account), the categorized teacher perceptions of his School Improvement (SI) practices, and an analysis of the norm checklist. These data then are synthesized into Burke's SI practices.

Emerging Themes in Principal Burke's Strategies During the SI Process

Two different themes emerge from Burke's strategies as he implemented his school improvement agenda. The first theme was personal intervention, related to:

1) getting control of the school (1980-81); and 2) improving the physical plant (1982-85). This intervention did not involve collaborative relationships. He used administrative prerogative in establishing student discipline, and he differentiated administrative from teaching responsibilities. He also unilaterally called in his markers with members of the community.

Once he had control of the school, his strategies became collaborative and entrepreneurial. He had to involve and position certain people to revitalize NHS as a college preparatory school for white and minority students. The role of entrepreneurial program manager (EPM) emerged as illuminative of Burke's collaborative and entrepreneurial strategies. Burke demonstrated a gift for encouraging certain faculty members to get involved in problem solving and articulating their programmatic goals.

Convincing parents once again to send their children to NHS involved public relations (e.g., parents night for college-bound students). Burke enlarged the scope of both his guidance counselors to include program development (college entrance and a dropout prevention program).

Burke improved the college preparatory program in two stages, first through instituting advanced placement courses, and, second, through tailoring programs to meet identified student needs (particularly in math and science). In both phases Burke kept lines of communication open to faculty. Constant communication with his teachers was essential for Burke. Burke was not a curriculum expert, but he had learned from his mentors how to influence and get the best out of teachers' expertise. This knack of reading people was complemented by an uncanny ability to get resources from "downtown" (e.g., for the magnet school, the OPT, the robotics programs and the athletic department).

Burke realized that entrepreneurialism, school improvement and teacher

motivation were inter-related. The more specialized and academically rigorous the curriculum, the more middle class students would return to NHS. The more resources he obtained, the more opportunities teachers had for creative program management. The more middle class students there were, the more teachers were pushed to improve their teaching and excel in the classrooms.

Congruency between Lee's SI Strategies and Teacher Perceptions

Table 1 indicates the categorization of teacher perceptions describing how Burke improved NHS. These categories were compared with Burke's SI strategies for their congruency.

Insert Table 1 about here

Many teacher responses were categorized as Professional Rapport with Teachers and Resource Provider (all ten teachers and seven, respectively). Burke appeared to benefit most from the rapport he had established with his teachers. He protected them from angry parents, backed them in conferences with angry parents, and protected them from downtown demands on paperwork. His management style was consonant with his receptivity to new ideas and having an open door policy. He sought input from those three or four teachers with invaluable perspectives on a particular problem, and called faculty meetings only when necessary (and only then to discuss what to do about school-wide problems).

This approach with teachers encouraged the development of the

Table 1

Nottingham High School: Teacher Perceptions of Principal School Improvements

Code	Category Descriptions and Examples	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	T*
SD	**Student discipline** was established. Instituted in-school suspension system; eliminated student smoking; suspended and expelled students on drug/alcohol violations, etc.; teachers were backed during parent conferences by principal; lunchroom rules; had rapport and was respected by students	x x x	x x		x		x			x		5/8
IPD	**Instructional Program Development**. Helped establish/improve academic programsx (e.g., advanced placement, Magnet School for Math and Science; Robotics and Engineering Program); Programs were designed to meet needs of underachievers and low-achievers	x	x								3	3
PAT	**Promoted student achievement tone**. Hired excellent teachers; student achievement improved; teaching improved (e.g., classroom observation in which notes re: suggestions for improvement placed in teachers' mailboxes; some teachers left voluntarily); made new department chair appointments	x x x	x x	x x	x	x x	x x x		x	x	x x	9/19
PRT	**Professional rapport with teachers.** Principal treated teachers as professionals; protected us from "downtown" demands on paperwork; excellent communicator so that teachers sensed ownership in school; principal hadknack for reaching poeple who could get the job done; principal would seek out certain teachers on a certain problem and bounce ideas off them; rarely interrupted classes with intercom; principal was open to new ideas and listened to teachers; backed teachers vs. angry parents; would carry his load	x	x x	x x x	x x	x x	x x x	x x x	x x	x	x x	10/24
RWP	**Rapport with parents**. Only 1 of 4 principals to attend principal conferences; helped lead parents' night for ninth grade parents interested in their students attending college; worked closely with PTSA; parents perceived him as "warm and sincere;" kept community aware of NHS's achievements; open door policy	x	x	x		x x	x	x				6/7
RP	**Provides resources**. Teachers received backing for their ideas; he pushed "downtown" for resources; he was a "risk-taker" who would put himself on a limb for a program meeting student needs; he pushed to get the magnet program (1986); he would ac- teachers on field trips; sets goals with departments and worked with them				x	x x	x	x x	x	x x	x	7/10
IPP	**Improved Physical Plant**. Built baseball field, track, football practice field; air conditioning units in some parts of the building			x				x		x	x	4/4
Abc	*T = totals # of respondents (10) / total responses											

entrepreneurial program managers. "Burke has a knack for reaching people who can get the job done" (Teacher No. 4). Burke's abilities to communicate, link up people with the right programs and jobs, and develop professional rapport with teachers through his participatory style of management resulted in professional relationships with his teachers. Teachers were encouraged both to articulate ideas and to convince him that their ideas had potential.

He then used his knack for providing resources from his relationships with the personnel "downtown." "He's a stubborn mule when it comes to the resources 'downtown'. When he gets his mind on a particular program, he'll go right up to the superintendent to get it. So teachers know that if they have a good idea and if he's convinced it will work and help students, he'll not only back them and be the risk taker (take part-blame if the program does not work), but he'll also get his hands on the right things to help the teachers develop the program" (Teacher No. 9). Generally, these teacher categories were congruent with Burke's collaborative and entrepreneurial strategies. (Both Teachers No. 4 and 5 described Burke as a "risk taker").

The categories Student Discipline and Promoted Academic Tone (with five and nine teacher items, respectively) connoted much of Burke's first school improvement phase, in which he got control of the school. He observed teachers to set the minimal standards, left most teachers alone, expected the best from them, and improved student attendance.

Rapport with Parents (identified by six teachers) related to Principal Burke's vision of encouraging parents to send their children back to NHS. He knew he had to convince the parents of college-bound students to send their children to NHS. Burke made himself accessible to parents through his open-door policy and by showcasing the school to prospective parents.

Why were there not more teacher interview responses to Student Discipline and Improved Physical Plant (only five and four teachers, respectively)? Some teachers were not at NHS when Principal Burke started his tenure, and may not have been aware of these school improvement practices. Second, the physical plant was not in the best of condition even after the building improvements. Teachers might have been looking for further improvements. Third, student discipline was considered by many teachers to be, if nothing else, the reason for a principal's existence. They might have simply assumed that any principal worth his/her paycheck can control the school.

Why was there so little response categorized as Instructional Program Development? Burke was not a curriculum or instruction expert. Teachers might not have seen Burke as being directly instrumental in program development because he did not do the actual work.

Analysis and Interpretation of Norm Checklist

Norms identified during teacher interviews were compared with the principal's strategies and the teachers' SI perceptions. The agreement among these three data sources comprise SI practices. Table 2 contains these norms.

Insert Table 2 about here

Thirteen of the 22 collected norms were analyzed as approximating Burke's Professional Rapport with Teachers, and substantiating this category as the centerpiece of Burke's SI practices. All 13 norms received at least the 80% minimum compliance (ten percent beyond the "cutoff"). Illuminative examples were Norm 2

Table 2

Norm Checklist for Nottingham High School

n	*Y*	*N*		
39	85	15	1.	"This is a good school in which to work: There is a cohesion among many faculty members. For instance, sometimes at the end of the year we have a faculty picnic. We do not have many interdepartmental power games or backbiting of teachers."
38	97	03	2.	The principal will stand behind his teachers when it comes to irate parents. He believes in his teachers and will protect his teachers if they are accused of wrong doing. If a teacher has done something wrong he will not tell you in front of the parents; the principal will tell the teacher in private.
39	97	03	3.	"We have short faculty meetings and only when necessary. Occasionally the principal will call the faculty to discuss and make us aware of certain problems."
39	95	05	4.	"You are allowed to really teach here. The principal does not interfere with what you are doing. Yet this does not imply that we have total freedom: some teachers are no longer with us."
36	75	25	5.	Our principal does not show favoritism (i.e., with teachers duties or requests for "extras" that can help our teaching). His decisions are based on what can best serve the interests of our students.
37	59	41	6.	The principal has set the expectation that he will make new teachers feel comfortable in their jobs. For instance, a teacher new to the school this year had been given air conditioning. Although few of us have air conditioning, most of us accepted this "extra" for a new teacher because we understand his concern for helping teachers new to the school.
36	100	00	7.	This principal uses teacher input that matches a situational management style--as opposed to involving the entire faculty. He will call in three or four teachers who have expertise in a particular area or ask for their reactions (i.e., "Do you think this will work?").
37	89	11	8.	"As teachers we perceive that we have a special purpose here at Nottingham High School: We are expected to put something extra into our teaching. Our principal has the highest expectations for our teachers and I think we lived up to these expectations without any resemblance of the traditional fear of principals that has existed in some schools."
36	100	00	9.	The more we publicize student achievement (e.g., through memoranda, faculty meetings and PTA newsletters) the more students expect high accomplishments. For instance three years ago only the top ten percent of our senior class was applying to four or five colleges. Now, the average senior is applying to three colleges each.
37	95	05	10.	Students who have transferred in from private schools usually believe that they are getting a good education here. Some of the students admit that, "It's harder here."
37	92	08	11.	Our principal operates an open door policy. Teachers can walk in and talk to the principal about concerns (i.e., we need to do something about this). He may set aside his paperwork to talk to the teachers; this sends the message that it is more important to communicate with teachers than to do paperwork.
36	81	19	12.	There is a widespread perception among our teachers that our principal will pull his load (even though he cannot be everywhere to help all teachers). This perception often is successful in getting us to do things we might not otherwise do.

n = represents how many of the 39 respondents elected to respond "yes" or "no"
Y = % of respondents answering "yes"
N = % of respondents answering "no"

Table 2 (continued)

n	*Y*	*N*	
39	92	08	13. He deals with people the way he wants to be treated himself. When there are problems with the faculty he handles them individually and privately. His first approach is, "How can we help you?" Because he spends time individually with faculty, he does not use faculty meetings to discuss things that he would discuss privately with one or two teachers. As a result, the faculty does not perceive that he is "checking up on us."
36	92	08	14. "If you have a good idea, you can talk to him because he is perceived as always listening to ideas. If you can convince him that your idea will work, he will be supportive in helping you build your program. He knows the right people and how to deal with "downtown" and the community. He may take risks to help you, but it is your responsibility to have the idea and then go for it. As a result of this mutual understanding an open marketplace concept exists in our school, and there is loyalty and trust between teachers and principal."
36	92	08	15. There are four categories of teachers in this school regarding willingness to try new things and grow professionally. There are the "entrepreneurial program initiators" who get an idea and support from the principal when needed. There are teachers who don't take the above initiative, but given direction, they will branch out. Examples here are in the math and science program where, as more motivated students started attending our school, teachers felt pushed to keep up with the students' academic demands. The third category consists of the straddle-the-fence teachers. Generally they are most concerned with their teaching. They can go either way, that is either in the fourth category or the second category, depending on the dynamics within the department or just their friends with successful experience with a certain program. The fourth category are the teachers who work to collect their paycheck and are out the door at 1:55 - just ahead of the students.
32	91	09	16. "This principal will back you with a parent (even if you are wrong the first time) but he will tell you when you are wrong in private. You don't mess up the second time because he won't go to bat for you the second time. You know this."
38	68	32	17. Everyone serves a purpose on this campus: from certain coaches who not only coach but can also deal with student discipline to the most academically-oriented teacher.
36	78	22	18. Student discipline may appear rather loose here (e.g., teachers and students often relate informally together). We will let a situation stretch, however, just so far and then we will have to tighten up and clamp down. (This process sometimes results in a quickly called faculty meeting to discuss possible remedies for that situation.)
38	95	05	19. "If you need assistance here you will get it (e.g., having a class covered, getting professional leave, or leaving campus during planning period to do errands). You are expected, however, as a professional to be responsible and to do a good job. The atmosphere here reflects the above two expectations: You are given certain freedoms and help that may not exist in other schools -- but the expectations are high."
38	100	00	20. "Our principal does not take up teachers' time (such as planning and duty-free lunch) unless absolutely necessary."
32	72	28	21. "You are expected to not go over the principal's head. If you have a problem, go to him, but do not go downtown or to board members, etc. If you do go over his head, your stock drops."
33	82	18	22. There are at least four different ways of solving problems in this school. There are morning meetings among the administrators and the counselors; there are department head meetings twice during every nine weeks; there are faculty meetings (only called when there is a definite problem); and occasionally students may be called in by a teacher or administrator when appropriate, (or students occasionally may take the initiative).

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(backing his teachers), Norm 4 (teachers allowed to really teach here), Norm 7 (situational, participatory style with teachers), Norm 11 (open door policy), Norm 13 (treats teachers as he would like to be treated), and Norm 20 (considerate of teachers' time). Norms 14 and 19 substantiated Burke's ability to provide resources for teachers. Norm 15 (defining teacher categories) supported the phenomenon of the entrepreneurial program manager (EPMs). Norm 5's relatively low agreement might substantiate this phenomenon in that by concentrating on the provision of resources for a few teachers, the perception of "favoritism" might have been inevitable. (This norm countered a traditional egalitarian norm of equal treatment of teachers.) The high agreement on Norm 15 might confirm the marketplace dynamic that those showing an initiative to start and run programs get more resources.

The teacher-generated categories Promoted Student Achievement and Student Discipline received teacher agreement (Norms 8 and 18, respectively). No norms were identified relating to Improved Student Plant. Only Norm 14 could relate indirectly to the Instructional Program Development category. Little norm agreement with this category was logical, since Burke was not a curriculum and instruction expert.

Norms 9 and 10 related to the SI category School-Community Relations, and also might relate to the 1985-1987 phase when Burke's public relations work paid off with a sudden influx of students who had previously attended independent schools.

Norm 6 might not have received norm agreement because of the example included in the norm. Giving new teachers supplies was one thing, but giving a new teacher air conditioning in a city of steamy, spring temperatures perhaps raised an emotional issue. The failure of Norm 17 to have teacher agreement (within two operants) might relate to negative responses of categories 3 and 4 of teachers, as opposed to the more entrepreneurial teachers. Teachers uninvolved in NHS's

program development network might have perceived less "sense of purpose".

The thirteen norms defining Professional Rapport with teachers and three norms corroborating the category Provides Resources substantiates the marketplace dynamic of the entrepreneurial program manager. The lack of norms identified relating to other SI categories raises two possibilities. One, the other practices might have related to previous phases of the school's improvement history (e.g., Student Discipline, Improved School Plant, and Promoted Academic Achievement). Two, these practices might have been relatively insignificant (e.g., Instructional Program Development).

Case Study Interpretation: A Unique Blend of Opportunism, Perspicacity, Rapport with Teachers, and Resource Procurement

Burke had the knack of visualizing where certain opportunities could fit into his School Improvement Agenda (SIA). One such opportunity was the chance to start a magnet school in the 1970s. Once Burke could visualize how such an opportunity could enhance his SI efforts, he used his professional rapport with teachers to link up curriculum improvements with the right people (EPMs). These individuals could establish and improve programs (e.g., the advanced placement courses, college advisement program, robotics and GED programs). His ability to find the appropriate resources was the final ingredient in the formula. Burke's ability to influence and work with people (learned from his mentor) resulted in an informal cadre of teachers and counselors performing the curriculum and instruction at NHS. Burke was merely the hub of the SI wheel.

His original Mission to make the school safe was accomplished (along with improving the physical plant) with generally unilateral, top-down strategies (e.g.,

appointment of department heads, calling in "chips" from community associates). But once he had control of the school, his ability to influence people was the crucial dimension in accomplishing his broader Visions.

To accomplish his vision of academic renewal, Burke's management style evolved toward participatory management because he needed the professional rapport with his staff. An open door policy and close daily communication enabled him to identify curriculum needs and involve teachers. Then Burke's knack for badgering the central office enabled him to build the program. Complementing the above practices was his ability to promote his school by selling the college preparatory image to prospective parents and his high expectations for classroom teaching. His ability to maintain these high expectations was an extension of his rapport with teachers and not related to his unilateral standard used in first getting control of the school.

Theoretic Discussion and Application to Practice

Sense of Mission vs. Vision in setting the Agenda

The two terms principal's mission and vision often are not differentiated in recent research on the principalship. For instance, Goldman, Dunlap, and Conley (1991) appeared to use mission and vision interchangeably. A distinction between mission and vision in the context of principals beginning their tenures in out-of-control schools, however, may be possible. Burke's mission (survival) differed from his vision: academic renewal through re-establishing NHS as an academic preparatory school with more aggressive students "pushing" teachers to provide more stimulating programs and an equitable curriculum. The sense of mission helped Burke survive; his sense of vision evolved as a product of organization context. Vision may mean translating opportunities into action which become operable platforms for their school improvement agendas.

Such a distinction has an implication for principal recruitment and selection. If management (vs. leadership) skills are needed for a particular school, previous experience and mission may be far more important than asking candidates to "articulate their visions."

Entrepreneurial Program Managers.

The conceptualization of EPM may have a strong implication for the emerging construct teacher work redesign. Hart (1990) cites Umstot, Bell & Mitchell (1976, p. 379) in defining this construct: "the deliberate, purposeful planning of the job, including any or all of its structural or social aspects, is one important facet of the reforms dominating the decade." Burke practiced this construct in combining a setting (e.g., his professional rapport with teachers) with resource procurement and the ability to visualize curricula needs (e.g., robotics program). Researchers might investigate the reciprocal relationship between principals and teachers as EPMs are identified. Do principals generally "select" these teachers? Or do principals create settings in which teachers self-select, or even engineer their own opportunities for professional renewal combining excellent classroom teaching with other talents? EPMs appeared to be key players in NHS's academic renewal. Is this a phenomenon that appears in other schools showing substantial improvement?

Instructional Leadership and the Principalship.

Gersten, Carnine, & Green (1982) speculate that instructional leadership may be supplied by staff members other than the principal. Glickman (1991, p. 7) concludes that, "The principal of a successful school is not the instructional leader but the coordinator of teachers as instructional leaders. . .The principal of successful schools is not the instructional leader but the educational leader who mobilizes the expertise, talent, and care of others" (p. 8). Burke appears to fit this coordinator role

especially since few teacher perceptions identified Burke as an expert in curriculum and instruction. Burke's behaviors support the notion of Hoy, Tarter, & Bliss (1990): Principal behaviors are not directly but indirectly related to instructional effectiveness; principals nurture a climate of academic achievement with a strong academic press and high student expectations.

Endnotes

1. Keedy, J. L. (1991). School Improvement Agenda and Practices of Successful Secondary School Principals. Unpublished manuscript. Pseudonyms were used in this study to protect the anonymity of key informants (especially teachers) who may have distinctively different perspectives regarding their principal's school improvement agendas and practices. This paper consists of one of the four case studies: Principal Burke and Nottingham High School (NHS).

2. The increase in student achievement data for NHS during Burke's tenure is demonstrated on Table 3. SAT verbal scores showed a steady increase from 346

Insert Table 3 about here

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to 397 and mathematics scores improved from 397 to 461 from 1983 to 1989. From 1986 to 1989 in the Test of Achievement Proficiency, reading increased 46% to 60%, mathematics from 42% to 51% and written expression from 49% to 57%. (These tests, given by state mandate to tenth graders, were first administered in 1986.) In addition, between 1986 and 1988, a total of 109 students took 169 advanced placement examinations. Sixty-five percent achieved a score of 3 or higher with 24% scoring 4 or higher. Since NHS served as a select school for engineering robotics, approximately 200 students currently were enrolled in this advanced curriculum. Academic scholarships from 1987 to 1989 totaled 1.2 million dollars. During this time period NHS had six national merit scholarship finalists and eight Georgia scholars.

Table 3

Nottingham High School: Student Achievement Data

Data Description		1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) Scores								
	Verbal	346	364	377	390	369	395	397
	Mathematics	397	404	389	418	420	437	461
Test of Achievement Proficiency (TAP)								
Grade 9	Reading				46%	53%	64%	60%
	Mathematics				42%	47%	56%	51%
	Written Expression				49%	53%	61%	57%
Abc								
Abc								
Abc								
Abc								

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